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DEPT FOR EUR/CARC, NEA/IR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/09/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: ARMENIA SUPPORTIVE OF U.S. STATEMENT ON IRAN

REF: A) SECSTATE 87682 B) YEREVAN 751

Classified By: Amb. John M. Evans for reasons 1.4 (b, d).

SUMMARY

11. (C) GOAM Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian publicly declared Armenia's support for the U.S. statement on Iran during a June 8 press conference (see text in paragraph 3 below). Oskanian's statement came after the Ambassador's push to President Robert Kocharian, Oskanian and Deputy Foreign Minister Arman Kirakossian to release a public statement (ref A, B). Oskanian told journalists that the GOAM has hopes for a peaceful, negotiated resolution, and that it welcomes the U.S. proposal to establish immediate contact with Iran. End summary.

12. (C) GOAM Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian publicly declared Armenia's support for the U.S. statement on Iran during a June 8 press conference. The statement came following the Ambassador's meetings with President Kocharian and Deputy Foreign Minister Kirakossian last week (ref B), while Oskanian was out of town. The Ambassador pushed Kocharian and Kirakossian to pledge support for the U.S. policy on Iran, and to make a public statement. They told him they had to wait for Oskanian before making any promises or a public statement.

13. (U) The following is the MFA translation of Foreign Minister Oskanian's public statement to journalists on Iran:

Begin text:

We welcome and assess positively the latest developments, because we do believe that this issue should be resolved through negotiations. And indeed, this issue is of great importance to Armenia, as we are a neighboring country. Thus, we welcome any positive developments. We welcome Solana's visit and the new package of proposals, and we welcome the fact that Iran did not turn it down. This is something which most everyone appraises positively, as do we. The proposal of the United States to establish immediate contacts with Iran is welcome. So, we assess positively all the developments of these last weeks. We welcome them and again express our hope that they really will yield positive results by resolving these issues through negotiations and peaceful means, without sanctions and without use of force.

End text.

COMMENT

14. (C) Armenia's support for the policy should have been a

no-brainer; the delay in the statement was due only to the foreign minister's absence from Armenia. Any move towards the improvement of relations between the U.S. and Iran will help the GOAM out of its current sticky spot -- dependent on U.S. assistance and support on the one hand, and reluctant on the other hand to criticize or limit ties to what it sees as its lifeline to the south.

EVANS